

COUNTER INFORMATION

SUPPLEMENT TO NO. 17 • 12 NOV. '87

Ballot papers have gone out today for staff at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital to vote on a deal hammered out between unions and Lothian Health Board.

The result is expected to be announced this weekend and in the meantime staff are working normally and have called off their overtime ban.

Lothian Health Board are understood to have given a commitment to improvements in the staffing and it is believed that between 50 to 60 new

nurses may be employed as a priority to bring the number of staff up to more than 690.

Shortages of nursing

staff led to action by the Confederation of Health Service Employees and the National Union of Public Employees.

Both unions are backing the new deal which is also believed to give a commitment to expansion and changes in working practices at the hospital. 9 NOV. 1987

EDINBURGH
EVENING NEWS

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS ANTI-YTS STRIKE NOV. 5TH

Edinburgh:

School pupils from Drummond High, Firhill, Gillespies, Loanhead and St. Thomas were among those who defied their teachers' threats of suspension and detention. Other strikers included YTS trainees from

+ Trinity Academy

'Sight & Sound', and students from Esk Valley and Stevenson Colleges.

The Edinburgh demonstrators' energy contrasted with the authoritarian stewarding by the organisers, the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign.

"IT'S just great to be back," exclaimed maverick miner Ted Scott this week, after finishing his first shift at Kellingley Colliery.

Jubilant Mr Scott, a former Glass Houghton pitman, was sacked from his job at Stillingfleet mine, in the Selby coalfield, for alleged misconduct.

As NUM branch secretary, British Coal accused him of organising disruptive and unofficial union activity.

His dismissal, last July, was followed by the offer of a job at Castleford's doomed Wheldale Colliery, which he refused to take. Then like other Wheldale men, he was suddenly given the chance

to start work at Kellingley as a face development worker.

"After discussing the offer with union officials and my wife, I decided to accept," he said at his Selby home. "After all, Christmas is not very far away."

"It's quite a relief to put an end

to what has been for me 16 weeks of uncertainty."

For the past four months he has been subsidised by the union and his wife, June, had to take a temporary job at a local pickle factory.

On Monday, Mr Scott stepped

into the yard of Big K to a warm welcome from his workmates on the afternoon shift.

"I'm nothing special," he said "these are lads I have worked alongside for years."

Mr Scott, whose sacking sparked off an overtime ban, was

But he is 40 years ahead with his claim of wrongful dismissal which is to be heard by an industrial tribunal next January.

A British Coal spokesman said this week: "The job at Kellingley is permanent and as far as we are concerned this is the end of the matter."

● Fifty men from Wheldale Colliery were transferred to Kellingley this week and another 50 will start work there next Monday as the wind-down of the Castleford mine begins.

Others have opted for jobs at Sharlston and Allerton Bywater, and some have been given work in the Selby field.

d Riley S NOV. 1987

told by British Coal that he could never be employed in the Selby coalfield again.

And he has been given the Kellingley job on the strict understanding that he does not organise union activities "in breach of the law."

A Doncaster miner writes:

Yorkshire Miners charge NEC with betrayal

At the Area Council meeting (each branch sends one delegate per pit) in Barnsley on 18th September, the delegates sat in stunned silence as the report back from the NEC was given.

Because branches had detected a cool wind blowing from the NEC they had imposed a unilateral overtime ban in Yorkshire themselves. Called "flexible" it aimed at allowing safety men and key workers to move around in order to allow the workers five days work but no more. This would have cut production by stopping maintenance and supply during overtime.

When on Friday the NEC announced the extent of the ban, a ban authorised by a 77% 'yes' vote, we were speechless. They had pissed the authority given them for action against the wall. All they would ban was coal production at weekends and in overtime. Fine, except Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland among others don't produce coal in those periods anyway. For these coalfields the 'ban' meant nowt at all.

As a result, for the first time since Arthur became national president the Yorkshire Council condemned the pathetic response of the NEC and resolved to organise a ballot in Yorkshire for stronger action in that county.

Since that time it appears there was outrage in the other coal fields and demands for stronger action from the NEC have caused some of them to have second thoughts.

The Yorkshire EC have now charged their NEC members to seek stronger action (a general overtime ban with minimal safety cover) and if this is not forthcoming an overtime ban will be implemented in Yorkshire.

The scene is set for rapid conflict, with the Coal Board saying they will close 11 Yorkshire collieries "within weeks" of an overtime ban. It is doubtful if the men at those pits will allow their pits to close and let everyone else keep on working. Obviously if the pits ARE closed they will likely strike, having nothing then to lose; and will probably halt the coalfield with pickets.

NOTE: Since this was written the Yorkshire NUM leadership have decided against organising a Yorkshire ballot on stepping up the overtime ban.

CLOSURES: British Coal have announced more closures at pits such as Linby(Notts), Wheldale, Redbrook, and Wooley (Yorks). Redbrook and Wooley miners have voted to oppose closure.

In Glasgow 1,000 striking school and college students marched against compulsory YTS. + AMONG OTHER SCENES OF SCHOOL STRIKE ACTION WAS COMENBESATH, FIFE

THE EXPRESS By Davi

BORNEO

IN THE forests of Sarawak in North Borneo, thousands of native people from different tribes are fighting to defend their way of life.

Deforestation is taking place so rapidly that by 1985 30% of the total forests had been logged and in 1987 60% of the forest area is now licensed out for logging.

The timer companies are building logging roads across native lands to connect logging areas to the river. In the process, forests, farmlands and burial grounds are damaged and destroyed and native women have been molested by timber camp workers.

As a result, the native people have manned barricades across the logging companies' roads and have asked the government to halt tree felling. The first blockade initiated in March has led to blockades in other areas, halting logging in at least 12 camps. Some blockades have lasted as long as a month at a time. They are determined to reclaim their land and say: "We will block the roads until we die".

• In Thailand also, villagers are taking on powerful logging interests, hired gunmen (attempting to murder the protesters) and corrupt officials in a battle to save the rain forests. In May and June hundreds of people marched many miles to demand that the loggers remove their equipment. Their protest succeeded and logging has stopped for now and the felled trees are not being moved. However, the villagers say their struggle to preserve the remaining forests and stave off ecological disaster has just begun.

Info: Survival International.

TAHITI

RIOTS BROKE out in Tahiti on 23rd October in support of dockers who had occupied the port of Papeete. They were demanding that more workers be taken on (unemployment is 50%). Police squads charged the dockers, who set fire to a warehouse and damaged a fire engine, before being pushed back.

As news of the attack spread, shops were looted and timber yards set ablaze in a two mile stretch along the waterfront and in the centre of the capital. 27 people were injured as helmeted gendarmes clubbed residents dressed in sandals and beach shirts.

SOUTH AFRICA

CONSOLIDATED Goldfields of the U.K. part owns the Tsumeb Corporation which has begun evicting striking miners from their hostels, with the help of police and the army.

POLL TAX : FACTS AND FIGURES

In Glasgow:

Biggest winners are prosperous Kelvindale and Newlands (paying 29% and 24% less). Losers include the working class areas of Calton, Crosshill, Easterhouse, Govan and Ruchill (paying 19%-42% more). A door to door canvass is expected in April 1988. To compile the poll tax register Councils will also extract information from the electoral and valuation rolls, rate collection records, rent rolls, housing waiting lists, housing benefit records, education authority records, library membership lists, etc. etc.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

"Some interesting actions around here. On Sept.2nd, a demonstration took place in response to a train running over a peace protester, Brian Willson. He was sitting on tracks right outside the Concord Naval Weapons Station in Concord, 20 miles east of here. It's used to store nuclear weapons, and to ship weapons to Central America, which is what this train was most likely doing. Brian Willson suffered two amputated legs and skull injuries. The demonstrators broke into and briefly occupied a building used by ROTC, a campus-based officer training programme. (This is the University of California campus).

On Sept.5th, several thousand gathered at Concord in a protest demo. While the media focused on stars like Jesse Jackson and Joan Baez, over 1000 people tore up 300 feet of railroad tracks. They refused liberal attempts to police and/or stop them (mostly guilt-tripping), went about without anyone in charge, and had lots of fun doing it. It felt like a festival, with people of all sorts of ages and lifestyles participating. Music and even whiffs of illegal odours filled the air. **And the trains stopped for a week."**

Berkley, California. 13 Oct.1987.

From the Daily Battle.

A TURN-UP FOR SWEDES!

Sweden, Sept. 15th:

15 Shell filling stations in Stockholm, Goteborg, Malmo, Lund og Orebro attacked. Once again, Shell pays for their support of apartheid in South Africa.

The pumps are smashed, glue is poured into the credit card slots, walls are decorated with stickers and paint is poured into the tanks.

The damage came to over £100,000 - encouragement to everyone else who fancies joining in the fun!

CHILE

OPPOSITION to the 14 year old junta was highlighted by a general strike on 8th October which led to transport disarray and city centre clashes, with 500 detained and a 2 year old boy shot dead.

FRANCE

FOR A number of weeks Moroccan miners have been picketting the North Pas-de-Calais coalfields. They represent 60% of the workforce and are fighting for their rights and for their livelihood.

The Moroccan miners have mobilised over the 'Pache' governmental plan which wants to axe 4,000 from the industry. As well as enforcing redundancies and encouraging early retirement it is offering a 'bonus' of 130,000 francs (£1,300) to 'return to the country of origin'; this constitutes an underhand expulsion of the immigrant workforce.

ANDALUCIA

IN ANDALUCIA, Spain, unemployment is the norm (see CI no.11). To obtain unemployment benefit, landless labourers must find work for 60 days per year.

The Rural Employment Plan provided work for those who failed to qualify. This has been cut back by the 'socialist' government. In response labourers occupied the town hall of Pruna, a village in the Sevilla region.

On 27th August about 100 civil guards attacked the hall injuring sixty occupants and arresting nine. Pruna is under near siege conditions. Local union offices have been destroyed and workers' homes raided.

Pruna inhabitants are now on hunger strike in the local church.

31st October: 15,000 - 20,000 people (2,000 masked) demonstrated in Hamburg in support of the squatters in Hafenstrasse. There were lots of riot police, vans, dogs and a helicopter. Police guarded banks and court buildings only. Stones were thrown at the police but they did not retaliate. Police radios were intercepted and it was discovered that the police were ordered to defend, not attack. The police were visibly frightened at the turnout. *SEND SAE FOR MORE INFO ON HISTORY OF HAFENSTRASSE

THANKS

The Counter Information Collective would like to thank everyone who sent donations towards our printing and postage costs and returned stamps following the appeal letter sent out with CI 16. We have received around £165, with donations coming from Corby, Cheshire, Hull, Telford, Glasgow, Berwick, Southampton, Oxford, Leeds, Aberdeen, Reading, London(several), Warrington(several), Scunthorpe, Stratford, Belfast, Edinburgh(several), Bellshill, Manchester, Australia, Denmark, W.Germany(several), USA(several).(sorry if we missed anyone out).

YUGO BREAKUP?

Successive waves of strikes by workers faced with 25% inflation, and acute nationalist tensions involving Serbia, have led to the resignation of the Federal Yugoslav Government. The system of workers self-management faces being dismantled but the concerns of workers are falling living standards and the removal of subsidies to industries in the already impoverished south. Railworkers, building, postal, utility, cleaning workers and teachers have joined the 1,400 identified strikes up to the end of 1988. The application of IMF dictated policies is causing a breakdown in the political and economic system, which may not be channelled indefinitely into intra-nationalist friction.

13 December: Hundreds of Warsaw students barricaded themselves inside the University and threw bricks and teargas at riot police on the seventh anniversary of martial law. Similar incidents took place in Gdansk on 11 December and other demos in Lublin and Lodz. A Solidarity spokesman said the Union had not organised the demos and condemned the violence. These demos have been marked by the youth of the participants and their indifference to official solidarity policy and police threats.

The majority of university students in Warsaw and Krakow are boycotting military training, Russian and socialist political economy lessons [all mandatory]. The boycott is now spreading to Gdansk. The Government has now agreed to negotiate with the students who want the classes abolished.

STUDENT POLITICAL unrest in South Africa, largely dormant since violent clashes in 1986 between black activists and police, is re-awakening in the Johannesburg township of Soweto.

During the past week, youths have burnt vehicles and stoned school buildings and on Monday local educational authorities withdrew 200 teachers from classes after some had been attacked and, in one case, stabbed. The acting head of education for the black township was reported in yesterday's press to have asked for police protection in anticipation of further violence.

LEEDS ABORTION FUND

If you were told tomorrow that all your freedom would be gone; that all your spare time would disappear; that your whole budget for your giro/low wage would have to be rearranged - practically that your life for the next 15 years would be like a prison sentence - you'd be horrified, distraught, frustrated. That's exactly what thousands of women feel each year when they discover against their wishes that they are pregnant.

We are an organisation called "Leeds Abortion Fund" and we exist to give money to women who need to have an abortion but can't afford to pay the fees of the private clinics. Obviously,

BRAZIL:

Brazilian workers in the State sector have been engaged in fierce battles to maintain living standards. An occupation at Volta Redonda, a steel mill employing 25,000 workers 70 miles north of Rio De Janeiro, led to a confrontation on November 9th as tanks and troops killed five workers. A permanent demonstration of 8,000 workers in the town kept alive the protests and strong local and CUT solidarity. The outcry over the use of the military created a different Government response to 60,000 Petrobras Oil workers going on strike. They extended the list of 'essential services' for whom strike action is proscribed and negotiated an acceptable settlement.

In the fight to preserve the Amazonian rainforests, contradictions in the exploitation of Brazil have surfaced. The killing of Chico Mendes (on 22nd December), organiser and spokesperson of rubber tapper, rural peoples and forest Indians alliances against wealthy landowners has highlighted the terror tactics being used to extend areas for cattle grazing at the expense of the global eco-system. 1,000 resistors have been assassinated since 1980.

ABLE PROTEST

March '88.

Disabled protestors stormed the Dept. of Transportation in Washington D.C. to demand access to buses. They chained up four main doors. Staff left through an underground garage.

Overnight, locals supplied them with food and blankets. Next morning police and employees were spotted sneaking through the garage. The entrance was blocked and wheelchair demonstrators immobilised buses by sitting in front of them.

NORWAY: As public spending cuts bit country wide, 10,000 of Halden's 26,000 inhabitants struck on 3 November against the closure of the local hospital. 11 days later in Sauda 3,000 of the 5,500 population demonstrated to keep their hospital open.

BHOPAL, INDIA: Protestors attempted to storm the Union Carbide Chemical plant in December on the 4th anniversary of the disaster which killed 3,000 and crippled 26,000.

GAY STRUGGLES

The Tasmanian Gay Law Reform Group run a weekly stall to distribute information about and petition against the Criminal Code sections which outlaw sex between consenting males, with a penalty of up to 21 years in prison. In September, the Hobart City Council banned the stall and refused to negotiate with the group. The stall continued to run and on 22 October nine members were arrested - thirteen were arrested a week later. When the police made arrests onlookers protested loudly and one hundred signatures were immediately added to the petition.

Ealing Council has banned publication of a cartoon which was to have appeared in the Women's Unit Newsletter. Officials banned it under Section 28 saying it was 'promoting homosexuality'. Ealing NALGO has now condemned the Council's actions, based on assumptions about the cartoonist's intentions. NALGO says that the purpose of the cartoon was to illustrate the discrimination lesbian faces. Interestingly, Councillor Turner, Leader of Ealing Council was one of the fifteen local authority leaders who pledged they would not bow to Section 28.



ANTI ET ACTION

FEB 14 - 28. 2 WEEKS OF ACTION AGAINST NACRO (ET agency hoping to conscript 20,000 unemployed)

HULME TENANTS OCCUPATION

After 10 weeks in occupation, the Hulme Tenants have been granted the reinstatement of the Tenants representative on the consultation committee.

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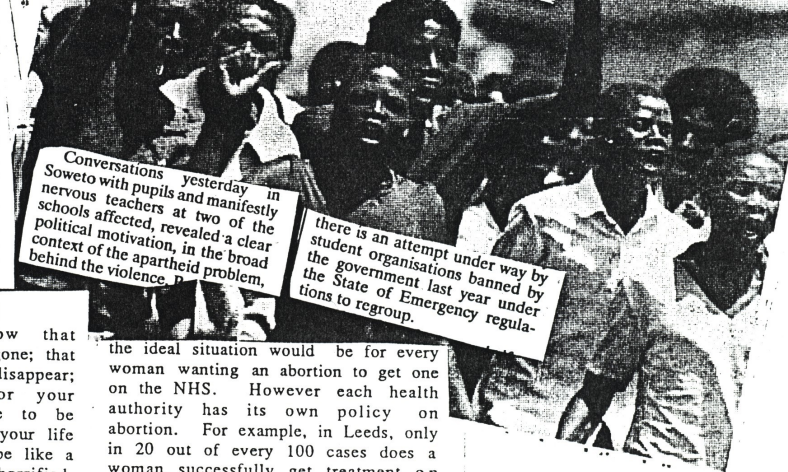
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THE INDEPENDENT Thursday 19 January



the ideal situation would be for every woman wanting an abortion to get one on the NHS. However each health authority has its own policy on abortion. For example, in Leeds, only in 20 out of every 100 cases does a woman successfully get treatment on the NHS. The private clinics charge at least £150 for an abortion - most unemployed women don't have this kind of money.

Help us to help these women in need by sending donations to us at: L.A.F., c/o Box 32, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS1 6DT. Cheques and postal orders made payable to "Leeds Abortion Fund"

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